News Release
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Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT MOVING FORWARD ON REDEVELOPMENT OF BLUE WATER REST HOME

ZURICH- The McGuinty government is addressing the unique needs of small and non-profit long term-care homes in a pilot project at the Blue Water Rest Home that will bring together both health and social services in a rural setting," Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"We are throwing away the cookie cutter approach to redeveloping long-term care homes in Ontario," said Smitherman. "Our goal is to be more responsive and flexible so that all homes in the province that need to be upgraded have that opportunity – Blue Water Rest Home is the first step in that direction."

Blue Water Rest Home was selected as the pilot for the McGuinty government's recently announced plan to redevelop 35,000 older long-term care beds over the next 10 years. Under this pilot project the ministry will:

- Provide a funding grant of up to $100,000 to plan for the redevelopment of the home
- Raise the construction per diem from $10.35 per bed to approximately $15.00 per bed to recognize inflation, construction costs and the specific challenges faced by smaller and non-profit homes

The ministry provides additional capital funds on a per bed, per day basis for each long-term care bed that is redeveloped. This additional capital funding is used to support the payment of loans secured by operators for actual construction costs of long-term care beds.

The ministry, the South West Local Health Integration Network and Blue Water Rest Home will work together to develop other programs, such as child day care, supportive housing units and training programs, that will transform the home into a hub of community-based services in a rural area.

"This announcement will end the uncertainty for small, rural homes like Blue Water Rest Home," said MPP Carol Mitchell. "By responding to the needs of smaller homes in our communities, we are helping to make certain that all seniors will receive the dedicated, compassionate care they deserve."

"We commend the government for moving ahead with this pilot program," said Martha Craig, Administrator, Blue Water Rest Home. "Smaller homes generally do not have the management strength and human resources availability to dedicate the time required to plan for a redevelopment. This funding will allow Blue Water to hire the resources we need to make the project a success."

Starting in 2008, the government will move forward with a Long-Term Care Renewal Strategy to redevelop about 3,500 beds each year.

This is just one more example of how, working together, Ontarians have achieved results in long-term care. Other initiatives include:

- Increasing funding for the long-term care food allowance 33.6 per cent since July 2003
- Funding 6,100 new front-line staff, including 2,300 nurses
- Opening 7,712 new long-term care beds since October 2003

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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